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Modern brands
that inspire

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北京青年报
BEIJING YOUTH DAILY

Death do us part?



Once upon a time, marriage was a practical affair in China. Couples got hitched not out of love, but simple desires for a stable home and down-to-earth life.

But as times changed – and marriage laws were amended – so has the idea of marriage. These days, more and more people are seeking their happily-ever-after by first filing for divorce.

**Read more
on Pages 4-5**

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Art of news photography

Studio lends money and support for students delving beneath the surface of documentary photography.

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Opera's dying in HK, too

A new documentary follows a dwindling art and the people who love it.

'Horrible Science' contest unveils results

By Liang Xiying

On the afternoon of December 19, the results of the 2012 "Horrible Science" Scientific Knowledge Contest were announced: the Fangcaodi International School team won first place after fierce competition among six teams.

The contest, which was organized by Beijing Publishing Group, Beijing Youth Newspaper Group, Beijing Children's Publishing House and *Beijing Youth Daily*, attracted over 4,000 children aged eight to 12 years from over 30 schools in Beijing.

More than 150 people joined the final contest, which included three parts – required questions, quick response and risk questions. Fangcaodi School team consistently held the lead. They showed great courage and brilliance.

Perhaps the luckiest team was Tiyuguan School. They fell behind the other five teams until the risk questions. Only Tiyuguan School team was able to win the 30 points for their question, allowing them to achieve second place.

After the contest, children from Fangcaodi International School performed an English play entitled *I Want to Dream*



Li Xiaobing (left), Beijing Youth Education Media Group chairman, gives awards to the winners.



Contestants take part in the final.

Photos by Qu Yongyuan



Competitors in the final

Spicy. The children's English impressed those attending. Then two magic shows brought the ceremony to a climax. The magician asked an audience member to draw a fish on a piece of paper. Then he rolled up the paper and poured out a live fish with water, while the fish on the paper disappeared at the same time.

"Horrible Science" is a spin-off of the "Horrible Histories" series written by Nick Arnold. They are designed to get children interested in science by concentrating on the trivial, unusual, gory or unpleasant. The "Horrible Science" Scientific Knowledge Contest is a good way for more children to know about this great book and learn more scientific knowledge.

Young job seekers cluster in the second Forum Emploi

By Li Zhixin

The second Forum Emploi opened last Thursday. Organized by the French Embassy, Club France, the French Chamber of Commerce and Industry in China (CCIFC) and French Jeune Chamber Economic Beijing (JCI), hundreds of job seekers poured into the forum to find their dream job.

Annais Schuenhoff, an international business graduate who came to Beijing for several months and applied for a purchasing position, did not feel good about her interview result because of her Mandarin level. "The company I applied for requires excellent communication skills in both French and Mandarin, but my Mandarin is so limited," she said.

Yang Xiaoman, who came with Schuenhoff, studied

public relations in France and worked for a modeling agency in Beijing, but is now seeking a position as an administrative assistant.

Although she was not satisfied with her performance in the morning interview, she has full confidence in another interview in the afternoon. "The company I was interviewed by in the afternoon is suitable for me in terms of specialty and the resources I already have," she said. "I am quite optimistic that I can find a good job."

There were more than 20 French companies participating, offering around 70 positions for candidates who are mainly French and Chinese and who have studied or worked in France before.

"We opened six positions including aerospace engineering, legal affairs, management



Participants and job seekers at the forum

Photo provided by the French Embassy

and communication for our candidates this time," said Marc Parrot, the vice president of Human Resource of SAFRAN, a leading international high-technology group with three core businesses: aerospace, defense and security.

"Either online applications or on-site applications are all active, but those who are not

only familiar with French culture but also Chinese culture and language are more competitive because there are half French and half Chinese in our team. We hope newcomers are able to fit into our mixed environment as soon as possible."

The forum was moved to Wuhan for its second round

of recruitment last Friday, according to Club France, a society initiated by the French Embassy in 2008 aiming to help French people and those who have study and working experience in France to find jobs in China and maintain their connections with France.

"It is estimated that Chinese students will surpass Moroccans as the biggest group studying in France next year," said Laure Castin, an embassy official responsible for French education promotion.

In the face of rapid growth of the number of Chinese students in France, the embassy plans to strengthen cooperation with Chinese universities and will promote French higher education in major cities throughout China starting next year.

Studio bolsters young photographers with funding, encouragement



One of the top 10 entries of the fifth OFPIX grant competition, Art of Architecture Photo by Liu Yuyang



Naked Marriage

Photo by Xia Shiyan



Coking Workers Surviving in Difficulties Photo by Sun Aiguo

Ren Yue is a photographer and news photography instructor at Renmin University of China. Before founding OFPIX with her friend, another teacher, she blogged about photography at 1416.me.

Through organizing offline activities like salons, workshops and camps, she realized that there were several problems in the industry that young photographers might find difficult to overcome.

"Some of them were majoring in other subjects, some were freelancers and some were facing financial difficulties," Ren said. "Their ideas and working ways weren't very professional. I saw many people wanted to do documentary photography, but didn't know how."

That's when she decided to open OFPIX, which offers a platform for integrating resources that aspiring photographers can use.

About a dozen people are affiliated with OFPIX, including press photographers, freelancers and others who are interested in the field.

OFPIX helps photographers select stories, then gives helpful guidelines and editing tips.

"Picture editing is the most important part," Ren said. "After they shoot, we have them attach captions to the pictures and select a batch that are related to each other. It's kind of like word editing."

Ren said because there aren't many news photography classes, many people who are in the profession are only superficially aware of the proper ways to do it.

"Photography today has become simpler, and information has become more abundant," she said. "So we need to dig deeper into the information. Photographers need to have reporters' qualities. This is what we want to help them with."

"I don't think the goal of social documentary photography is to get a beautiful photo, but to let photos interact with the facts they reflect, or even to

By Liu Xiaochen

OFPIX, a studio established in June, is a platform for young photographers to improve their documentary photography skills.

The studio is currently running its fifth grant competition, where professional judges will award one winner with the funds to finish his or her dream project.



Archives of the Old Village

Photo by Cheng Xinhao



We are Together

Photo by Jiao Dongzi

promote or change that fact. At the very least, we get people to pay attention to what we're shooting."

OFPIX often hooks photographers up with NGOs. They also organize exchanges with professionals from other fields.

Ren said photographers should have varied interests. Sociology, anthropology and architecture are all helpful.

"I had an internship at a newspaper once. They required photos to be relatively simple and direct," said Hu Lingfeng, who joined OFPIX this year after graduating with a journalism degree. "I rather liked it here, and learned a lot. There are many like-minded and excellent photographers whom I can communicate with (at OFPIX)."

Fan Jingcheng, a freelancer who won the third OFPIX grant competition, said he's met lots of good colleagues through the organization.

"Many young photographers are worried because they don't know how the future will turn out, with the pressure to survive in this industry," Ren said. "They do need to be nurtured from the beginning of their career."

OFPIX is a way to get them started.

"I got a fund before, too," Ren said. "I'm very happy to give back to others."

The review process this year will feature professional judges who are asked to score applications and give advice where appropriate. OFPIX will send all applicants the judges' comments.

The program has been successful enough that anonymous donors began contributing last year.

More than 20 photographers have applied so far. Two groups of works win funding by the end of this month.

"We give 5,000 yuan to help them with living expenses, but the advice we provide is more important," Ren said. "The more they learn and the more encouragement they get, the better they'll be in the long term."

in China

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en he gets rich.

for many Chinese who achieve
alties to their spouse and family
alize their new status can open

nd better, however, is a double-



CFP Photo



Yang Wei



gquan

A common case

By Chen Nan

An Dun, a veteran reporter and writer, has been recording and observing love and marriage for more than 15 years.

She has collected stories of both successes and failures. One thing is for sure though: lots has changed since she first began her research.

"The values of Chinese people are closely connected to their social situation," she said. "Their marital status directly reflects the changes that have taken place."

She told the story of a couple, Wang Jianjun and Li Hua, who married hastily before realizing how problematic their life together could be.

Wang and Li met at work in the 1980s. They had very little in common, but people around them urged them to accept each other as life partners because they were 'of age.'

The two never had a romantic relationship. "People of my age grew up in a simple time," Wang said. "At that time, economics and culture was less developed, so we didn't have too many considerations. What I wanted was to find a suitable girl to have a down-to-earth life."

Li impressed Wang with her good character, gentle nature and filial respect. In Wang's eyes, she could be depended upon to take care of their family.

"I didn't believe I would ever divorce her, because I don't want to lose such a stable relationship," he said.

Soon after getting married, Wang recalled they never really communicated. "I wasn't satisfied," he said.

Li never demanded much from her husband. She never objected to suggestions. If he planned to buy a Santana car, she wouldn't suggest a Jetta; when he decided to relocate their family to Wangjing, she went along.

When Wang established a cultural media company with his friends, Li quit her job at the school to become a housewife.

"She doesn't push forward any new ideas, and I think she's too dependent on me," Wang said.

After a while, Wang could hardly bear it anymore. One day, while shopping for clothes, Wang excitedly asked his wife: "What do you think of this?"

"Well, do you like it?" Li replied.

If he said yes, she would totally agree with him, but if he said no, she would continue looking around. She seemed to completely lack

individuality, Wang thought.

"She has no faults, but I'm not happy at all," he said. "I can see our life being exactly the same in 10 years."

And then one day, another woman came into his life.

A colleague, Zhao Xiaobin (not her real name), was an independent woman who was willing to offer constructive opinions to help Wang's business.

Gradually, Wang and Zhao settled into deep, in-depth conversations. Wang felt he should stay loyal to his wife for the sake of their children though.

But after years of emotional neglect, Li was at a breaking point as well. She grew highly suspicious, and began checking his phone and email.

Eventually, she came to the conclusion that there was no chance to salvage their relationship. It was she who took the first step in filling out a divorce form.

An Dun said that there are many couples who are older, who grew up in the '60s and '70s, undergoing similar drastic emotional conflicts.

She said that wide rifts can form between husband and wife, who don't know how to balance work and family.

"It's not a moral thing. It's not a character thing. Whenever you give people an opportunity not to be in pain, they're gonna take it," An said. And the lower you set the threshold, the earlier they're gonna take it.

"Actually people are starting to feel increasingly content and brave. The prospect of the future - home maintenance, single parenting - is still frightening, but having weathered a storm worse than they could ever have imagined, they feel like they can now accomplish anything."



An Dun

My Way: the survival of an ancient and ritualistic art



By Chen Nan

My Way (2011) is a 72-minute documentary about two Cantonese opera whizzes in Hong Kong, Wang Houwei and Tan Yinglun, striving to revive the old arts and to transform their artistic ideals into reality.

The work is composed of two parts: one depicts the story of 11-year-old Tan; the other is about the backstage life of the two young opera stars.

My Way is director Cheuk Cheung's first documentary. This Hong Kong filmmaker follows two youths who have been captivated by male *dan* – a female lead role that is typically played by male actors.

Marginal men in a marginalized art

The first part of the documentary, shot in 2004, is devoted to the early life of Tan, a drama prodigy with his family's support to continue as an artist.

The second part was shot from 2009 to 2011, mainly focusing on the two performer's life struggles.

Born into an ordinary family, Tan was endowed with operatic gifts. Influenced by his grandpa, Tan had tremendous enthusiasm for traditional opera. As a child, he watched opera actors perform. When the stage transformed and was radiant with light and magic, his eyes doubled in size. He longed to be like them.

Of course, art does not exist purely out of passion. So in addition to documenting the ideal, it also illustrates the difficulties of balancing artistic dreams with scholastic and family pressures.

The picture shifts from 2004 to the present lives of Tan and Wang.

Opera performers must be trained, stretching and contorting and disciplining their bodies, to learn the precise and demanding techniques of makeup and song.

All these are considerably time-consuming, and Tan gradually suffers from insomnia, hardly attending school.

But Tan can't afford to quit school; he knows if he drops out of school he could only be a waiter in a restaurant.

In addition, because the adult Tan no longer had a slender build and soft features, he began to play male roles in the opera. Inevitably, he felt the on-stage pressure.

On the other hand, Wang pursues the role of *dan* against the strenuous objections of his mother.

In order to dispel people's bias on cross-gender performance, Wang tried to make a difference in this field, hoping to be a *dan* icon in Cantonese opera, as Mei Lanfang was in Peking Opera.

From assignment to documentary

The two leading actors first met



Photos provided by Cheuk Cheung

when Wang was a student at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in 2004.

By that time Tan, the child with a feminine voice, was trained to play female roles in opera. Wang was fascinated by Tan's early start as a *dan*.

In order to finish a film assignment given by his college professor, Wang decided to approach Tan in order to make him the subject of his film.

Through his efforts, Wang also tried to show his mother how families could support a child to relentlessly pursue their artistic dreams.

From then on, the two opera performers became good friends, clad in their opera costumes on the same stage, forming a partnership in art.

Years later, Wang's college friend, Cheuk, who was attracted by the old art form, hoped to record his understanding of traditional opera by filming actors.

"Through some research, I realized that Wang and Tan's lives were intimately intertwined. Therefore, I decided to juxtapose their paths in this film, and thus the current rendition of *My Way* was shown," said the director.

"I try to follow the life of opera performers to record how they reserve traditional values and preserve their artistic dreams in such a commercial society," Cheuk said.

Cheuk is also concerned about the interaction between actors and social context.

"I hope to narrate a Hong Kong indigenous story and establish a connection between this movie and Hong Kong," he said.

This is the film's fundamental point. To convey it, the director draws parallels between contemporary and traditional arts in Hong Kong and the real lives of the two actors.

This focus attracted investment from CNEX, short for "Chinese Next" and "See Next," a non-profit foundation devoted to the production and

promotion of documentaries by Chinese filmmakers.

His film project proposal intrigued Sylvia Chang.

As one of the producers of CNEX, she strives to facilitate cultural exchange through supporting documentaries depicting contemporary Chinese people.

Moved by the ingenious opera performers and their perseverance, she suggested extending the script into a feature-length documentary.

Forging a path

Cheuk considers performers are the most important factors in opera, as they are recording our culture through their bodies and personal devotion.

But their off-stage lives are scarcely seen; no one understands their inner world.

"The position of male *dan* in opera circles is similar to the status of artists in society; they can hardly be considered mainstream individuals," Cheuk said.

Hong Kong, a cosmopolitan city that is considered an intersection of western and eastern cultures, is supposed to embrace multiculturalism.

"However in such a city, to ordinary people, art can probably only be regarded as an interest, but not a profession, and art may be labeled as a minority activity," the filmmaker said.

Since the transmission of old art forms have met with financial and marketing issues, they gradually become marginalized.

"In a profit-driven society like Hong Kong, Cantonese Opera is vulnerable to losing its meaning and sustainability," he said.

Art has always been a luxury item in Hong Kong. The practical realities of everyday life force art to be compromised or overlooked.

But thanks to those young people who have perseverance and love, an artistic path does not necessarily lead to a dead end.



Get inspired with modern Chinese brands

7

Shopping



By Annie Wei

Everyone who has lived in the country has the idea of buying one or two pieces of nice Chinese furniture.

Those on a tight budget find items at Gaobeidian antique furniture market, but style options are limited.

This week, *Beijing Today* introduces two emerging fine Chinese furniture brands known for simplicity with a modern twist.



Banmoo – functional and simple

As one of the country's earliest experimental brands, Banmoo started a two-month exhibition at Gehua Dasha's design hall in early December.

Founder Lü Yongzhong is a famous space and furniture designer. In 2006, he founded this brand in Shanghai, hoping his furniture would not only be functional, but also a reflection of Chinese culture and aesthetics.

The pieces are simple and beautiful – easy to match with other furniture of traditional or modern decor.

The exhibition showcases his classic designs of the past six years, placed in special architecture spaces and paired with work

from other designers.

Banmoo's designs are available at B.N.C. and UCCA art stores.

For the exhibition

Where: Gehua Shejiguan, A-13, Gehua Dasha, 1 Qinglong Hutong, Bei Xiaojie, Dongcheng District

Open: 10 am – 5 pm, RSVP, December 7 – February 6, 2013

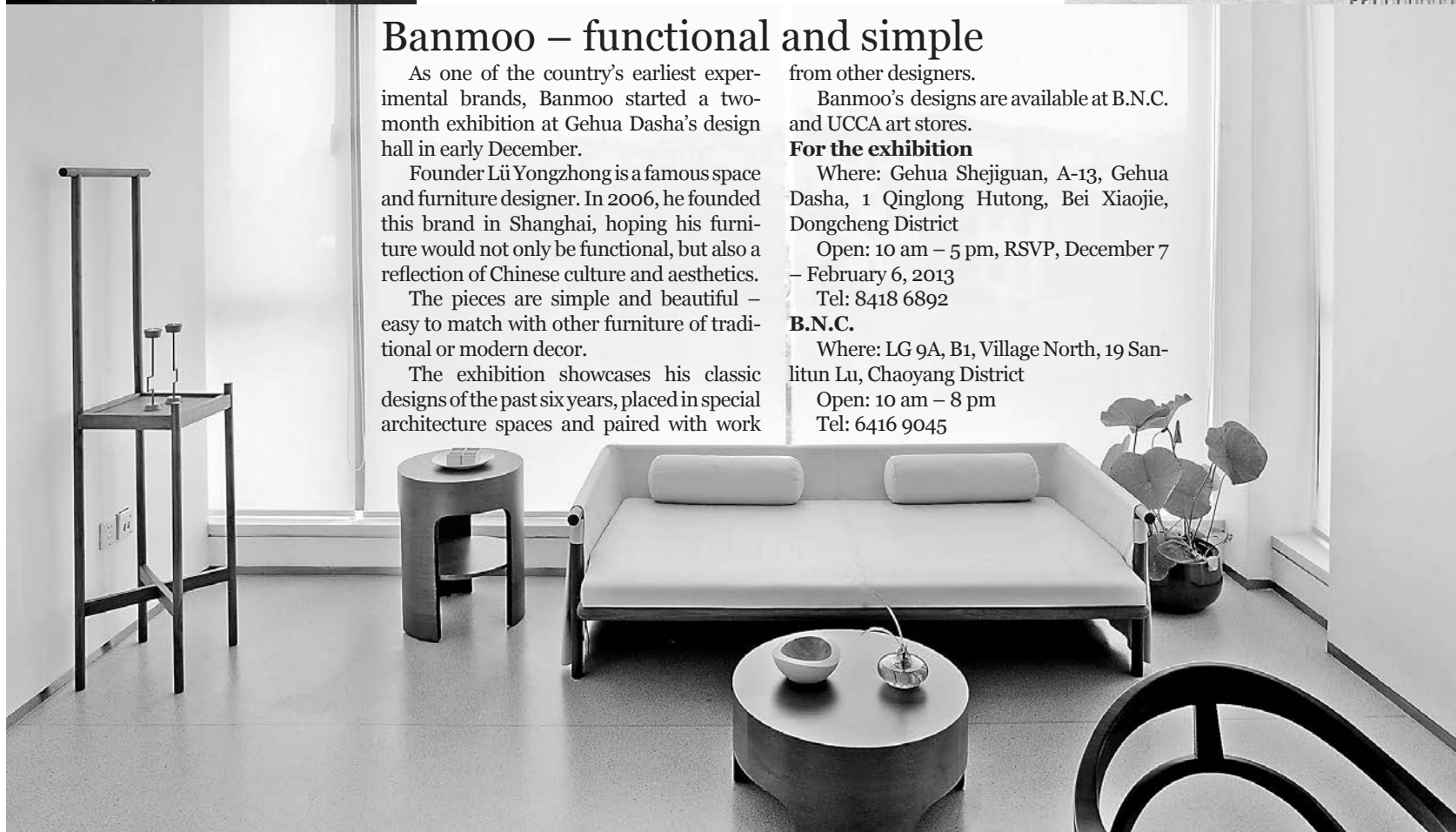
Tel: 8418 6892

B.N.C.

Where: LG 9A, B1, Village North, 19 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 10 am – 8 pm

Tel: 6416 9045



Banmoo's exhibition at Gehua Dasha

Photos provided by B.N.C.



Bamboo chair

Photo provided by Chunzaidesign.com

Chunzai – unique pieces all about details

Founded in 1991 in Shanghai, the brand has a dozen years of experience in high-end antique furniture repair and design.

We particularly like its bamboo series, which are beautiful and comfortable to use.

Chunzai's furniture has high requirements for design, material selection and processing. The brand has a group of experienced workers that hand-carves patterns, paints and assembles items. This means limited yearly production of around 2,000 pieces.

The brand currently only has showrooms in Shanghai, but anyone interested can check its website chunzaidesign.com.

Pearson Longman English World

born / had

- ✗ She *born* a baby last week.
- ✓ She *had* a baby last week.



'Born' cannot be used as an active verb. 'Have a baby' is used instead.

⇒ See also Section 4.5: BORNED / BE BORN.

almost / hardly

- ✗ It was so crowded we *almost-couldn't* move.
- ✓ It was so crowded we *could hardly* move.



When you can only just do something a little, you use 'hardly' with a positive verb rather than 'almost' with a negative verb.

Exercise

Exercise:

Which expression is normally used?

1. instead of 'almost can't'
We _____ afford such a high rent.

2. instead of 'bear / born'
She's going to _____ a baby next week.

Answers: 1. could hardly 2. have



Book title

Common English Errors in Hong Kong (New Edition) 是一本专门为香港初、中级英文水平的学生所编写的自学教材。本书指出并纠正大量本地学生所常犯的英文文法与字法使用上的错误，并附有非常生动活泼的插图，深受青少年学生的青睐。



New JE Mansion near Summer Palace

JE group expands west

By Annie Wei

Since 2009, JE Mansion on Fourth East Ring Road has been a popular spot for its delicious food, attentive service, large lawn and lush garden.

This month, the JE group opened another high-end venue, JE Yiyuan, under the foot of Yuquanshan Mountain, close to the Summer Palace.

Yiyuan is a traditional southern Chinese courtyard style, with gray bricks and carved wooden doors.

Its Chinese restaurant Huaifu focuses on Beijing Duck and imperial dining. Yiyuan boasts that its restaurant collects private family recipes and recreates new royal flavors to cater to

today's customers.

We enjoyed the lion's head meat balls, but it seems more expensive than at other restaurants. This is because it is made from rare and expensive ingredients like ginseng.

The vegetable pumpkin soup features needle mushrooms in a small pumpkin with wolfberries. The soup tastes mellow and rich, with a nice pumpkin aroma.

We also like its specialty shrimp. Each serving comes with four shrimps prepared with special sauce, tasting sweet and salty, crispy on the outside yet tender inside.

As an opening discount, Huaifu charges 500 yuan per diner, which is lower than the

800 yuan it charges in its eastern location.

Yiyuan also offers Japanese cuisine with sushi, sashimi and teppanyaki.

When next spring comes, any visitor can enjoy a cup of coffee and relax at the mansion's first-floor cafeteria, overlooking 50,000 square meters of green lawn.

It's also an ideal place for company meetings and gatherings, with four conference halls that can cater for 10 to 200 people, an art center, guest rooms and a golf club.

JE Mansion Yiyuan

Where: 18, Xiwa Guoyuan, Beiwucun Lu, Yuquanshan, Haidian District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 8259 6669



The vegetable pumpkin soup Photos provided by JE Mansion

Fine dining in Sanlitun

By Annie Wei

Looking for intimate fine dining spots without the chaotic crowds? Here are two restaurants in Sanlitun that aim at quality instead of quantity.



At F by Tribute



Tart tatin

Photos by Teng Chuan

F by Tribute brings California cuisine

Sanlitun South Street is a much quieter area when compared to the Village. But with an increasing number of visitors and new property in the neighborhood, there is demand for better food.

The new F By Tribute has replaced the long-running Secret Garden, receiving plaudits from diners.

Owner Frank Sun owns a restaurant named Tribute in Hong Kong. Some years ago, he had a restau-

rant in Jianguomen named Tribute North. For the new restaurant, F is short for food.

The restaurant focuses on California cuisine, with fresh ingredients, creative recipes and delicious flavors. The menu changes frequently. The two-course business lunch is 118 yuan, or three courses at 138 yuan. For dinner, the five-course menu costs 398 yuan, or 598 yuan for eight courses.

California wines are also a feature, including Robert Mondavi and the Hess collection from Napa Valley (starting from 480 yuan per bottle).

Sun was an architect by training, and he has given the interior a modern and comfortable design.

F By Tribute

Where: 6 Sanlitun Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – late

Tel: 6501 7501

The Loop – interesting wine selection

Near the Heaven Supermarket, The Loop is not easy to find. If you are looking for delicately prepared food with quality wine, it's worth seeking out.

Most nights the restaurant has only two or three full tables. But owner Lu Weiley said it was what he hoped for – a quiet and cozy dining space to make sure the service is attentive.

Most appetizers start at 45 yuan, with main courses between 75 and 150 yuan.

As a food and wine lover himself, Lu's menu and wine list is updated monthly to reflect seasonal and fresh ingredients.

When dining at The Loop,

we suggest you ask Lu for wine recommendations. He also keeps his own cellar that includes a collection of rarities.

We also recommend following the restaurant at its Weibo account and applying for its guest chef menu tasting.

On the last Sunday of every month, The Loop invites a guest chef to prepare a set menu from his home country and pair it with a special wine, with prices starting at less than 300 yuan.

The Loop

Where: 1 F, 36-1 Sanlitun Nan Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 6 pm – late

Tel: 8772 5713



Tapas at The Loop

Photo by Teng Chuan